

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. A method for rendering a portal graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:  
 providing for the representation of a GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book as a set of controls wherein the controls can be organized in a logical hierarchy;  
 traversing the representation, wherein the traversing comprises:  
     associating a theme with a first control in the set of controls;  
     rendering the first control according to the theme;  
     rendering any descendents of the first control according to the theme;  
 wherein any descendents of the first control can override the theme; and  
 wherein one of the set of controls can communicate with another of the set of controls.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
 the desktop is a view of a portal;  
 wherein the desktop can be represented by a desktop control; and  
 wherein the desktop control is hierarchically superior to the shell control and to the book control.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
 the look and feel determines the appearance of the portal;  
 wherein the look and feel can be represented by a look and feel control; and  
 wherein the theme is a variation of the look and feel.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
 the book can be used to navigate to at least one portal page; and  
 wherein the book is represented by a book control.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
 one of the set of controls can respond to an event raised by another of the set of controls.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
a control can have an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
a control can have an interchangeable rendering mechanism.
8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
accepting a request.
9. The method of claim 8 wherein:  
the request in a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) request.
10. The method of claim 8 wherein:  
the request originates from a Web browser.
11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
generating a response.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
a control can represent one of: button, text field, menu, table, window, window control, title bar, pop-up window, check-box button, radio button, window frame, desktop, shell, head, body, header, footer, book, page, layout, placeholder, portlet and toggle button.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
associating the theme with the first control can occur when the first control is rendered.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
the first control inherits the theme from a parent control.
15. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the theme specifies the appearance and/or functioning of an control in the GUI.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
rendering the first control according to the theme can be accomplished in parallel with rendering of other controls.
17. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
the theme can be specified in whole or in part by a properties file.
18. The method of claim 17 wherein:  
the properties file can include at least one of: 1) cascading style sheet; 2) Java Server Page; 3) Extensible Markup Language; 4) text; 5) Hypertext Markup Language; 6) Extensible Hypertext Markup Language; 7) JavaScript; and 8) Flash MX.
19. The method of claim 17 wherein:  
the properties file can specify at least one image.
20. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
the GUI is part of a portal on the World Wide Web.
21. A method for rendering a graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:  
accepting a request;  
mapping the request to the set of controls that represent a GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book, and wherein the controls are organized in a logical hierarchy;  
traversing the representation, wherein the traversing comprises:  
    associating a theme with a first control in the set of controls;  
    rendering the first control according to the theme;  
    rendering any descendents of the first control according to the theme;  
and  
wherein any descendents of the first control can override the theme.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein:  
the desktop is a view of a portal;  
wherein the desktop can be represented by a desktop control; and  
wherein the desktop control is hierarchically superior to the shell control and to the book control.
23. The method of claim 21 wherein:  
the look and feel determines the appearance of the portal;  
wherein the look and feel can be represented by a look and feel control; and  
wherein the theme is a variation of the look and feel.
24. The method of claim 21 wherein:  
the book can be used to navigate to at least one portal page; and  
wherein the book is represented by a book control.
25. The method of claim 21 wherein:  
the request in a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) request.
26. The method of claim 21 wherein:  
the request originates from a Web browser.
27. The method of claim 21, further comprising:  
generating a response.
28. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
one of the set of controls can respond to an event raised by another of the set of controls.
29. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
a control can have an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
30. The method of claim 1 wherein:

a control can have an interchangeable rendering mechanism.

31. The method of claim 21 wherein:

a control can represent one of: button, text field, menu, table, window, window control, title bar, pop-up window, check-box button, radio button, window frame, desktop, shell, head, body, header, footer, book, page, layout, placeholder, portlet and toggle button.

32. The method of claim 21 wherein:

associating a theme with the first control can occur when the first control is rendered.

33. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the first control inherits the theme from a parent control.

34. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the theme specifies the appearance and/or functioning of an control in the GUI.

35. The method of claim 21 wherein:

rendering the first control according to the theme can be accomplished in parallel with rendering of other controls.

36. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the theme can be specified in whole or in part by a properties file.

37. The method of claim 36 wherein:

the properties file can include at least one of: 1) cascading style sheet; 2) Java Server Page; 3) Extensible Markup Language; 4) text; 5) Hypertext Markup Language; 6) Extensible Hypertext Markup Language; 7) JavaScript; and 8) Flash MX.

38. The method of claim 36 wherein:

the properties file can specify at least one image.

39. The method of claim 21 wherein:  
the GUI is part of a portal on the World Wide Web.
40. A method for rendering a graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:  
providing for the representation of a GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book as a plurality of controls wherein the controls are organized in a logical hierarchy;  
traversing the representation, wherein the traversing comprises:  
    associating a first theme with a first control in the plurality of controls;  
    rendering the first control according to the first theme;  
    associating a second theme with a second control in the plurality of controls;  
    rendering the second control according to the second theme; and  
    wherein the second control is a descendant of the first control.
41. The method of claim 40, further comprising:  
accepting a request.
42. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
the desktop is a view of a portal;  
wherein the desktop can be represented by a desktop control; and  
wherein the desktop control is hierarchically superior to the shell control and to the book control.
43. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
the look and feel determines the appearance of the portal;  
wherein the look and feel can be represented by a look and feel control; and  
wherein the theme is a variation of the look and feel.
44. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
the book can be used to navigate to at least one portal page; and

wherein the book is represented by a book control.

45. The method of claim 41 wherein:  
the request in a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) request.
46. The method of claim 41 wherein:  
the request originates from a Web browser.
47. The method of claim 40, further comprising:  
generating a response.
48. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
the first control can respond to an event raised by the second control.
49. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
a control can have an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
50. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
a control can have an interchangeable rendering mechanism.
51. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
a control can represent one of: button, text field, menu, table, window, window control, title bar, pop-up window, check-box button, radio button, window frame, desktop, shell, head, body, header, footer, book, page, layout, placeholder, portlet and toggle button.
52. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
the first control inherits the first theme from a parent control.
53. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
the first theme specifies the appearance and/or functioning of the first control in the GUI.

54. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
the rendering the first control can be accomplished in parallel with the rendering of the second control.
55. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
a theme can be specified in whole or in part by a properties file.
56. The method of claim 55 wherein:  
the properties file can include at least one of: 1) cascading style sheet; 2) Java Server Page; 3) Extensible Markup Language; 4) text; 5) Hypertext Markup Language; 6) Extensible Hypertext Markup Language; 7) JavaScript; and 8) Flash MX.
57. The method of claim 55 wherein:  
the properties file can specify at least one image.
58. The method of claim 40 wherein:  
the GUI is part of a portal on the World Wide Web.
59. A machine readable medium having instructions stored thereon that when executed by a processor cause a system to:  
provide for the representation of GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book as a set of controls wherein the controls are organized in a logical hierarchy;  
traverse the representation, wherein the traversing comprises instructions to cause the system to:  
associate theme with a first control in the set of controls;  
render the first control according to the theme;  
render any descendents of the first control according to the theme;  
wherein any descendents of the first control can override the theme; and  
wherein one of the set of controls can communicate with another of the set of controls.
60. The machine readable medium of claim 59, further comprising:



accepting a request.

61. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
the desktop is a view of a portal;  
wherein the desktop can be represented by a desktop control; and  
wherein the desktop control is hierarchically superior to the shell control and to the book control.
62. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
the look and feel determines the appearance of the portal;  
wherein the look and feel can be represented by a look and feel control; and  
wherein the theme is a variation of the look and feel.
63. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
the book can be used to navigate to at least one portal page; and  
wherein the book is represented by a book control.
64. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
one of the set of controls can respond to an event raised by another of the set of controls.
65. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
a control can have an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
66. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
a control can have an interchangeable rendering mechanism.
67. The machine readable medium of claim 59, further comprising instructions that when executed cause the system to:  
accept a request.
68. The machine readable medium of claim 67 wherein:  
the request in a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) request.

69. The machine readable medium of claim 67 wherein:  
the request originates from a Web browser.
70. The machine readable medium of claim 59, further comprising instructions  
that when executed cause the system to:  
generate a response.
71. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
a control can represent one of: button, text field, menu, table, window,  
window control, title bar, pop-up window, check-box button, radio button, window  
frame, desktop, shell, head, body, header, footer, book, page, layout, placeholder,  
portlet and toggle button.
72. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
associating the theme with the first control can occur when the first control is  
rendered.
73. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
the first control inherits the theme from a parent control.
74. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
the theme specifies the appearance and/or functioning of an control in the  
GUI.
75. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
rendering the first control according to the theme can be accomplished in  
parallel with rendering of other controls.
76. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
the theme can be specified in whole or in part by a properties file.
77. The machine readable medium of claim 76 wherein:

the properties file can include at least one of: 1) cascading style sheet; 2) Java Server Page; 3) Extensible Markup Language; 4) text; 5) Hypertext Markup Language; 6) Extensible Hypertext Markup Language; 7) JavaScript; and 8) Flash MX.

78. The machine readable medium of claim 76 wherein:  
the properties file can specify at least one image.

79. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:  
the GUI is part of a portal on the World Wide Web.

80. A computer data signal embodied in a transmission medium, comprising:  
a code segment including instructions to provide for the representation of GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book as a set of controls wherein the controls are organized in a logical hierarchy;

a code segment including instructions to traverse the representation comprising:

a code segment including instructions to associate theme with a first control in the set of controls;

a code segment including instructions to render the first control according to the theme;

a code segment including instructions to render any descendents of the first control according to the theme;

wherein any descendents of the first control can override the theme; and

wherein one of the set of controls can communicate with another of the set of controls.